

Cuba

Increase in Defense Capability since January 1961

When the present Administration took office it considered the strengthening of our national defense a matter of top priority. Promoting the national interests of the United States against a powerful adversary required that we make our points from a position of strength. This policy has paid off in Berlin and in Cuba, and we now have the initiative.

Among the improvements in defense capability inaugurated under this Administration--and enabling us to negotiate the Cuban situation from a position of strength--are:

1. Military Personnel

The total number of military personnel on active duty was approximately 200,000 higher on the eve of the Cuban crisis as compared to January 1961.

	<u>December 31, 1960</u>	<u>September 30, 1962</u>
Army	876,000	962,000
Navy	630,000	662,400
Marine Corps	176,300	192,000
Air Force	<u>810,400</u>	<u>869,500</u>
TOTAL	2,492,700	2,685,900

2. Army combat-ready divisions

On the eve of the Cuban crisis last October the Army had 15 combat-ready divisions compared to 11 in January 1961. Today we have 16 combat-ready divisions.

3. Army Special Forces

In October 1962 the number of special troops for use in guerilla and counter-insurgency operations had more than doubled since January 1961.

4. Polaris

In January 1961 we had three Polaris submarines in commission compared with nine in commission on the eve of the Cuban crisis. Also, the production rate was accelerated from a schedule of five per year to 12 per year by FY 1964.

Under this accelerated program we will have, by the end of FY 1964, 24 Polaris submarines in commission as against 16 so scheduled before this Administration took office.

5. Marines. Marine Battalion landing teams of about 1,700 men each have been embarked in the Second, Sixth and Seventh Fleets to reduce reaction time in emergencies.

6. Naval Ships. There were 46 more active fleet ships in our Navy at the time of the Cuban crisis than were operational in January 1961. An additional attack aircraft carrier had been retained in the service rather than phasing one out as planned when new carriers joined the fleet.

7. Fleet Readiness. The capability of naval operating forces had been further enhanced by the increased tempo of operational and training exercises undertaken at the time the Berlin build-up in the summer of 1961.

8. Command and Control. Between January 1961 and October 1962 a number of steps were taken to strengthen and improve the command and control of strategic and other military forces primarily through the acquisition and establishment of airborne and seaborne command posts.

9. Bomber Ground Alert. The ground readiness posture of the manned bomber force was increased considerably in this period. In October 1962 approximately 50% of the force was on a 15 minute ground alert compared to 33% of the force in January 1961.

10. Air Support for Ground Forces. Air Force tactical air support for the ground forces had been increased to 21 wings, five more than in being in January 1961.

11. Airlift. Airlift capacity has increased approximately 50% in this period.

12. Communications. From January 1961 to October 1962, there was a substantial expansion in communications capability, both in the area of national command communications (between national command posts and world-wide military commanders) and in tactical systems, particularly in the areas of Berlin, West Europe, and South East Asia. Major factors in these improvements were the establishment of an integrated Defense-wide communications system under the Defense Communication Agency and steps initiated in the Cuban crisis to establish a Government-wide system capability.